Detachment 1
1129TH USAF SPECIAL ACTIVITIES SQUADRON
P. O. Box 882, Las Vegas, Nevada

Station Report

Las Vegas, Nevada

and

Area 51

MAR 1964

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

I - History:

An affluent metropolis, third fastest growing in the nation, characterized by sky-high wages, young families, high-priced homes, high rent and a population as transient as a desert thunderstorm. This is Las Vegas.

Las Vegas has been an official city only since May 15, 1905, when it was formally established as a townsite on the railroad which is now the Union Pacific. By 1956, the townsite had become a world famous city, with about 50,000 residents within the city limits and 104,000 in the community. This has now reached 89,000 and 193,600 residents as of 1963.

Centuries ago, spring water in what is now Las Vegas, a name which loosely translated means "The Meadows," was well known to Nevada's first residents, the Mojave, Piutes and Pueblo Indians. Their inscriptions, recorded on rocks and the walls of caves (some can still be seen in the nearby Valley of Fire) are monuments to the nomadic life of that era.

The first white men to enter the Las Vegas area were Spanich missionaries, Catholic Franciscan priests, who started from Sonora, Mexico, in 1775 to explore the country between Mission Santa Fe in New Mexico and Mission San Gabriel in California. They wanted to blaze a trail linking the two missions and bring Christianity to the Indians.

From their visits with the Indians, the exploring parties learned of the fertile greenlands by the "big springs," the Las Vegas of today. The routes they established were quickly utilized by other Spaniards on their hazardous trips from New Mexico to California. Las Vegas was an important stop on what is known today as the "Old Spanish Trail."

During the days of the gold rush to California, scores of travelers, wending their way south when winter closed the more direct route to the north, used the Las Vegas Springs route on their way to make hoped-for fortunes.

Congress recognized the importance of the all-weather trail to the wealth of the Far West in 1852 when it appropriated a "rich sum," all of $25,000, to build a military road from Salt Lake City by way of Las Vegas Springs to San Bernadino.

In 1855, the Mormons erected a fort at Las Vegas, which they abandoned in 1858. Until 1864, Las Vegas Springs remained simply as a watering place on the trail when Federal troops took over the establishment as part of the effort of guarding the West during the Civil War. The troops temporarily renamed it Fort Baker in honor of their commander.

From then on, Las Vegas has been continuously populated. On the heels of the Federal troopers came ranchers to take advantage of the mild, semi-tropical climate.

The Old Spanish Trail and the Federal military road were followed by better roads for the wagon trains, including the famed 20-mule teams hauling supplies to the potash works in Death Valley, just over the Panamint Range to the west. Shortly after the turn of the century, the San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad Company started laying its rails from Southern California to Utah.

Las Vegas was a logical midway point for the new railroad. Accordingly, the company bought up much of the acreage around the Springs, laid out a townsite and held an auction of building lots.

When the auctioneer's gavel fell on the last bid of the sale, Las Vegas passed from its childhood as a pioneer watering place, fort and farming hamlet, and entered as a growing city.

Today, about 15 million tourists visit Las Vegas each year, taking advantage of the year 'round healthful climate, exciting night life and vast recreational facilities of the area.

Operating 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, Las Vegas offers both excitement and relaxation for the entire family at exceptionally low prices. Here can be found the famous resort hotels where the world's greatest entertainers appear nightly, guest ranches where families spend their winter months and summer vacations, modern and spacious motels with swimming pools, and downtown hotels.

With the motto "Come as You Are," the dress is informal and atmosphere is relaxed. "Howdy Podner" is the official greeting of Las Vegas.

The sun shines 84 percent of the time; rainfall is under 3.46 inches annually and the average mean temperature is 66 degrees. Continuous sunshine and low humidity make Las Vegas America's outstanding desert resort.

II. <u>Facts about Las Vegas:</u>

A. Location:

Las Vegas is geographically located as follows:

Los Angeles	290 miles
San Francisco	588
Salt Lake City	453
Phoenix	298
Seattle	1313
Reno	447
New York City	2754
Miami	2743
Washington, D. C.	2476

B. Altitude: 2033 feet

C. Area of City; Approximately 28 square miles

D. Hospitals:

Southern Nevada Memorial Hospital

Las Vegas Hospital and Clinic

Rose De Lima Hospital

Boulder City Hospital

Sunrise Hospital

Womens Hospital

No. Las Vegas Hospital

E. Accommodations: World famous as a resort and convention center, Las Vegas boasts 14,390 rooms -- 8,046 resort and commercial hotel rooms and 6,344 motel rooms. There are 200 fine restaurants serving cuisine of nearly every nation in the world.

F. Population: Las Vegas is one of America's fastest growing and most astounding cities. The commercial and residential center of Southern Nevada, the city's population has jumped from 24,624 in 1950 to over 89,000 in 1963. It is neighbored by North Las Vegas with 27,000 residents, the industrial city of Henderson, 12 miles to the southeast, numbering 17,300 and nearby Boulder City, 4,800. The Greater Las Vegas area (Clark County) has an estimated 193,600 residents.

G. Schools: Las Vegas schools are rated excellent. There are 37 elementary, 6 junior high and 3 high schools in the city besides 5 parochial elementary schools, and 1 parochial high school, Nevada College of Commerce and Nevada Southern, a branch of the University of Nevada.

H. Transportation Facilities: Serving a new modern air terminal area are seven major airlines -- Bonanza, Delta, National, TWA, United and Western. Also serving the city are 3 bus lines -- Continental Trailways, Greyhound and Las Vegas-Tonopah-Reno Stage Lines; The Union Pacific Railroad, and 4 major highways -- U.S. 91, 93, 95 and 466. Las Vegas Transit Lines is the local bus line operating in the city.

I. Churches: More than 80 churches, representing almost every faith, hold regular services.

J. Taxes: Nevada has the lowest tax rate of any state in the nation. No income, inheritance, estate or gift, franchise, inventory or corporate income taxes. Nevada's constitution limits personal property tax to $5 per $100 assessed valuation. The only other tax is a 2 percent state sales and use tax. Manufacturer's distribution costs are reduced in Nevada by the liberal Freeport property in transit through the state while it is stored, assembled or processed.

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K. Industry: Titanium, lime, manganese, gypsum, silica sand, chlorates, and chlorine are among the major industrial and mined materials shipped from this area. Clark County is believed to have the greatest variety of commercial minerals and metals of any county in the United States. Included among the major industrial operations is the nuclear research and development work being conducted by the AEC at the Nevada Test Site near Las Vegas. Nellis Air Force Base, 8 miles northeast, largest jet base in the U.S., is one of 5 nearby military bases.

L. Cultural Activity: Las Vegas has a very active Art League with more than 200 members who are interested in all phases of art, an Opera League, a Symphony Society, and a Little Theatre group. Over 280 civic, social, business and service organizations meet regularly. A new $6,000,000 Convention Center is available for all these activities as are various city-owned facilities.

M. Also serving the community are two daily newspapers (Las Vegas Review-Journal and Las Vegas Sun), seven radio stations, three television stations, four indoor motion-picture theatres, plus 3 drive-ins, four banks, and several fine shopping centers. Babysitting services are also available 24 hours a day.

III - Recreation:

Las Vegas is the hub of the scenic Southwest with Hoover Dam, Lake Mead, Lake Mohave and the Colorado River offering year round fishing camping, boating, and water sports. Nearby Mt. Charleston has winter skiing, picnic and camping facilities and the Valley of Fire is a photographer's paradise. A few driving hours away are Death Valley, Zion, Bryce and Grand Canyon National Parks. The city's recreation facilities include five 18-hole golf courses, bowling alleys, swimming pools, tennis courts, baseball, basketball and football leagues.

Since Nevada is the only state in the Union where gambling is legal and rigidly controlled by the government and since Las Vegas is the largest city in the state, it is easily one of the most unusual cities in the U.S. Here, Hollywood mingles with the hinterland crowd - sables and minks set off scuffed western boots, which in turn contrast with the less regional garb of the thousands of tourists.

There are two main areas of gambling, entertainment and shopping in Las Vegas. "Downtown" is Fremont Street, also known as "Glitter Gulch." Here, under fabulous neon signs are three blocks of famous and original gambling halls and the so-called downtown "hotels." The rest of Fremont Street is like Main Street in any other American small town. It is composed of small retail stores and other business houses that serve the needs of a community of this size.

The other main street of Las Vegas is the famous "Strip," Las Vegas Boulevard. From downtown Las Vegas, the "Strip" extends approximately 8 miles toward McCarran Airport. The first five miles are composed of small retail stores, motels and business houses. Thereafter, starting with the Sahara Hotel,

one enters the most fabled playland in the world. To enumerate and describe all the pleasure palaces would merely confuse the reader. Suffice it to say that here are three miles of the most magnificent resort hotels, some with up to a thousand rooms, whose facilities include swimming pools, gambling and the finest in nightclub entertainment. If one can stay away from the gaming activity, entertainment along the famous "Strip" is reasonably priced. Dinner for two, including one of the spectacular hour and one half shows, will cost about $12.00 to $15.00, not including drinks or tax. However, one can see the midnight performance of these spectaculars for a minimum of $3.00 to $5.00 per person, which includes three drinks each. The smaller lounge shows may be seen for the price of the drinks consumed.

IV - Housing:

More than 30,000 homes and apartments offer comfortable residence in Las Vegas. There is an adequate choice of homes for sale and apartments for rent, and many competent contractors to build to specification. The average home in Las Vegas costs about $15,300. Rent, however, averages $96 per month and is in the top 30 percent bracket in the U.S.

As of this writing, a construction of homes is booming in every price range, and purchases can be made with a minimum down payment of approximately 5% if FHA financed.

There are over fifty rental trailer parks within ten miles of Las Vegas. A nice two-bedroom trailer averages about $85.00 to $100.00 per month plus about $5.00 a month for butane.

Although Nellis AFB and Indian Springs AFB are located within the Las Vegas area, military personnel who are assigned to Area 51 are NOT eligible for housing on-base.

There are three other small cities within a 20 mile radius of Las Vegas: Henderson, Boulder City, and North Las Vegas. Rent in North Las Vegas averages about the same as Las Vegas, but rent in Henderson is the lowest in Clark County and $5 below the national average. For those personnel willing to live somewhat further from Area 51, these communities might offer more reasonable housing and living conditions.

Assistance in finding adequate rentals or purchases is available by the Area 51 Base Commander or his representative.

V - Cost of Living:

Living costs in this area are higher than the national average, probably one of the highest consumer indexes in the U.S. Services including such crafts as plumber, electrician, carpenter, iron workers are a good 15 to 20 percent higher than comparative services on the East Coast. Cheap labor markets normally available in the larger cities are not available in Las Vegas. Public transportation, although reasonably priced, is very limited in service and a private automobile is an essential means of transportation.

AREA 51

Area 51, which was reactivated in late 1959 to begin flight testing the new project vehicle, is administered by the Organization [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] The site is commanded by a USAF Officer (Colonel) and his Deputy 25X1
Executive, who is the senior Organization representative. The Base is composed of USAF military personnel, civilian staff and contract personnel [redacted] and several contractor personnel engaged in project 25X1
research.

Reynolds Electrical and Engineering Company (REECo), under the direction of a Camp Manager perform site maintenance and housekeeping, and supplies the Area with everday housekeeping and maintenance supplies and equipment under the general administration of the Area 51 Base Commander.

In welcoming you, the new assignee, to Area 51 we would like to give you the following information about this Station:

I - Location:

Area 51 is located approximately 120 miles northwest of Las Vegas and 53 miles north of Mercury, Nevada, at the edge of the Nevada Test Site. (See attached map.) It can be reached only by automobile and aircraft, Constellation from Los Angeles and C-47 from Las Vegas. Since there is no public surface transportation between Area 51 and Las Vegas, and since space on the contractor C-47 is available only on a first-come, first-served basis, personnel are urged to bring their own automobiles since it may be their only means of transportation between the Area and Las Vegas.

II - Lodging:

All personnel assigned to Area 51, whether they have a family in Las Vegas or another city, will be assigned quarters and provided meals without cost during their stays on Base. Personnel will live in Babbitt houses or trailers, one or two men to a room. All homes and trailers are well furnished and have air-coolers and heaters. Towels and bedding, including linens and blankets, will be furnished without charge. Incoming personnel are advised that only simply field living conditions are provided and there is no locked storage suitable for the protection of valuables within the Area. Therefore, personnel should provide their own footlockers.

Television sets are available in all houses and trailers and personnel are requested not to bring their personal TV sets to the Area since antennae arrangements do not provide for unlimited hook-ups. Also, AM radio reception is poor during daylight hours and FM reception is nonexistent. If you are considering a transistor-type radio, consider no less than a 7 transistor unit.

Messing facilities operated by Reynolds Electrical and Engineering Company are excellent. The newly constructed Mess Hall can accommodate approximately 1500 people, and hours of operation assure all personnel, regardless of working shifts, three full meals daily. There are no shortages, and fresh fruit, milk, coffee, tea, pies and cakes, salads and ice cream are always on the serving line.

III - Clothing Worn At The Area:

The weather is ordinarily extremely dry, although severe rainstorms and occasional snowstorms are experienced. Extreme seasonal temperatures may be anticipated with below freezing temperatures during the short winter months and extreme heat and intense sun during the summer months. High winds and a considerable amount of dust are to be anticipated, and it is advisable to have plastic clothes bags for protection of clothing. It is recommended that personnel include the following minimum requirements in their wardrobes:

Cotton trousers	2 or 3 per week
Cotton Shirts	1 per day
Shoes	Low shoes are adequate if you do not go beyond the immediate area. It is recommended that GI shoes, combat boots or engineer boots be worn in your trips to the field or test areas.
Sun Glasses	1 pair

Note: During the period 1 November to 15 April, personnel must supplement the above items with winter apparel such as jackets, gloves, socks, etc.

IV - Laundry And Dry Cleaning:

A free do-it-yourself laundromat, with soap and bleach furnished, is available on-site and if you are handy with an iron, bring it. Personnel with dependents naturally will be able to have their laundry done at home. Laundry can be sent to a Las Vegas laundry through REECo on Tuesdays and Thursdays weekly, and be picked up a week from the day it is sent. Dry cleaning and laundry is expensive; for example, it costs about 85¢ to have a pair of trousers dry cleaned and about 45¢ to have a shirt laundered.

V - Working Conditions:

Informal wear is the order of the day during working hours. Walking shorts and T-shirts or sport shirts are included in the normal attire during the summer months. With few exceptions, all buildings are air-cooled or air-conditioned. The temperature may reach 120 degrees outside, but your work areas remain comfortable.

VI - Medical Facilities:

A USAF staffed dispensary provides 24-hour medical coverage for the Base. There are no hospital facilities on Base, and military personnel are authorized to use Nellis AFB facilities in Las Vegas while civilian personnel must use hospital facilities in Las Vegas or Los Angeles. In emergency cases, civilians are evacuated to Las Vegas or Los Angeles and military personnel to Nellis AFB. A clinic is held for military personnel and their dependents assigned to this detachment every Friday at Nellis AFB by the Air Force Officer General Practioner assigned to this Station.

VII - Recreation:

The center of recreational activity on the Base is a newly constructed Conditioning Building containing six bowling alleys installed by Brunswick Corporation, a dry heat room, enclosed swimming pool, handball court, squash court, physical improvement room, paperback library, and a basketball court. The bowling alleys are equipped with automatic pinsetters and ball returns, and a fee of 25¢ is charged for each game bowled. There is no charge for shoes.

Movies, provided by the Armed Forces Motion Picture Service, are shown every night of the week except Saturday. 25¢ is usually charged, but a slightly higher price is sometimes asked for the higher grade movies. Listed below are other recreation facilities at Area 51:

A. Recreation Hall containing

1. Beer Bar
2. Hardback library
3. Six pool tables
4. Ping pong tables
5. TV room
6. Hobby room
7. Shuffle board
8. Snooker table

B. Full-size gymnasium containing (To be completed o/a June 1964)

1. Basketball court
2. Badminton court
3. Exercise area

C. Outdoors

1. Softball field
2. Four tennis courts
3. One basketball court
4. One volleyball court
5. One badminton court
6. One handball court
7. One golf cage

The Recreation Department publishes a weekly bulletin listing the weekly movie schedule, mess hall menu, bowling league standings, etc. Attached to this report is a typical Recreation Bulletin.

VIII - General Information:

A. Constellation and C-47 Aircraft

Since both planes are used primarily for the transportation of contractor personnel to the Area, seating space for military and civilian personnel wishing to utilize these aircraft is limited to a first-come, first-served basis.

B. Auto Registration:

Nevada registration of privately owned vehicles can be done in Las Vegas or Camp Mercury. If your auto is registered in Nevada, you must obtain a Nevada Operator's Permit. All privately owned autos must also be registered with the Area 51 Security Office. Further information concerning this subject will be given to you during an Admin briefing upon your arrival at this Station. FYI, auto insurance is extremely high in Nevada and personnel should be prepared to pay high liability rates.

C. Church Services:

For those on Base over weekends, religious services are held at Camp Mercury and Indian Springs AFB and transportation is made available to anyone desiring to attend the service of their choice.

D. Barber Shops:

Facilities are available at Camp Mercury, Las Vegas and Nellis AFB. Every Wednesday there is a barber at Area 51 from 0800 to 1800 hours. Average price of a haircut throughout southern Nevada is $2.50. However, military personnel can get haircuts at Nellis or Indian Springs AFB for $1.25.

E. Purchasing Facilities:

A small on-site PX in the Rec Hall offers toilet articles and preparation, tobacco, magazines and newspapers, soft drinks and beer.

F. Telephone Service:

Public telephones for personal calls are not available on-site. Emergency calls may be authorized from on-site by the Area 51 Base Commander.

G. Mail Service:

The Post Office Department has established a first class post office at Camp Mercury. However, for your personal mail, if you are not residing off-site, civilians will use P. O. Box 732, Las Vegas, and military personnel will use P. O. Box 882, Las Vegas. Both are serviced daily and mail is delivered to the Area. A letter drop is also available on-site for your convenience and serviced daily.

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H. Check Cashing Facilities:

There is no check cashing facility at Area 51; however, bank drafts, traveler's checks and government checks can be cashed at Camp Mercury upon presentation of proper identification. Personal checks can not be cashed on the Nevada Test Site. Personal checks can be cashed in Las Vegas casinos and hotels, but arrangements must be made at the casinos and hotels beforehand. It is strongly recommended that personnel make arrangements with local banks to handle their financial matters because out-of-state checks are difficult to cash in Las Vegas.

I. Service Station Facilities:

There are no service station facilities available on-site for purchase of gasoline and repair of personal vehicles. There is a service station at Camp Mercury, but none between Camp Mercury and Area 51. Gas prices in Las Vegas are about the same as Washington, D. C., however, personnel should be prepared to pay as much as 42¢ for a gallon of regular gas in the isolated desert areas.

J. Animals and Pets:

The keeping of animals and pets on-site is prohibited.

K. Use of Photographic Equipment:

Personal cameras may be brought to the Area, but photography is prohibited within any section of the Nevada Test Site, including Area 51. Upon arrival, all cameras must be registered with the Area 51 Security Office.

L. Firearms:

Carrying or using firearms of any type whatsoever will not be permitted within the confines of the Nevada Test Site. Firearms may be transported to the Area provided they are immediately registered with the Area 51 Security Office.

M. Desert Fauna:

The surrounding desert area is amply inhabited with lizards, copperhead and king snakes, deer, mountain sheep, jack rabbits, bobcats, and badgers. Part of our zoo is pictured in the "art gallery at the Area."

RECREATION DEPARTMENT
WEEKLY BULLETIN
March 30, 1964

MOVIE SCHEDULE

SUNDAY AND MONDAY

"COME BLOW YOUR HORN" with FRANK SINATRA, LEE J. COBB, and JILL St. JOHN. Mature Comedy in Color. (Rousing comedy wherein bachelor Frank and his little brother frolic with lovely ladies in plush surroundings.) Sorry 50¢ for this one.

TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY

"IN THE COOL OF THE DAY" with PETER FINCH and JANE FONDA. Drama in Color. (The lives of two unhappily married couples erupt amid the ruins of Greece.)

THURSDAY AND FRIDAY

"DIAMOND HEAD" with CHARLTON HESTON, YVETTE MIMIEUX, and GEORGE CHAKIRIS. Drama in Color. (The ruthless head of an agricultural dynasty on Hawaii finds his personal beliefs challanged when his young sister wants to marry a native Hawaiian.)

BOWLING NEWS

"607, 617, 639, 680 WOW"

The Great Ones' FRED LIGHT and Maintenance's JOHN KIMES bumped heads Tuesday night in "A" Division play. The Great Ones took all three games by a total of 17 pins. Fred ended up with a 617 series while John finished with a 607.

Jolly ROGER ADAMS paced Security to a four game sweep over the Agitators with a big 639 series. This enabled Security to remain five games behind the front running Great Ones.

High series this week was turned in by JIM GRAU of the Plumbers. Jim rolled a 209, 268 and 203 for a 680 series to lead his team to three wins over the Pinsplitters. Jim also picked up a 6-7 split. "WHAT A NIGHT"

NOW YOU KNOW

Americans in 1963 consumed a record 261 million gallons of distilled spirits. **DID YOU GET YOUR SHARE? **

RECREATION SCHEDULE

BOWLING ALLEY

11 AM to midnight Monday thru Friday...Noon to midnight on Saturday and Sunday. Two lanes held for open bowling except on Monday. Also located in this building is a squash court, handball court, heat room, and exercise room.

MOVIE THEATER

7:30 PM except Saturday.

SWIMMING POOL

11 AM to midnight daily.

BEER HALL

4PM to 10:30PM Monday thru Saturday. Ping Pong table, Pool tables, Shuffleboard, and TV lounge are also located in this building. These facilities may be used between the hours of 8 AM and midnight.

OUTDOOR SPORTS

Outdoor facilities include tennis courts, basketball courts, golf driving cage, and softball field. Equipment for these sports may be checked out at the bowling alley.

W E E K L Y M E N U

MONDAY
SOUP: Potato
LUNCH: Beef Stew
DINNER: Roast Pork

TUESDAY
SOUP: Chicken & Rice
LUNCH: Diced Turkey
DINNER: Steam Boat Roast

WEDNESDAY
SOUP: Cream of Tomato
LUNCH: Meat Balls & Ham
DINNER: Fried Chicken

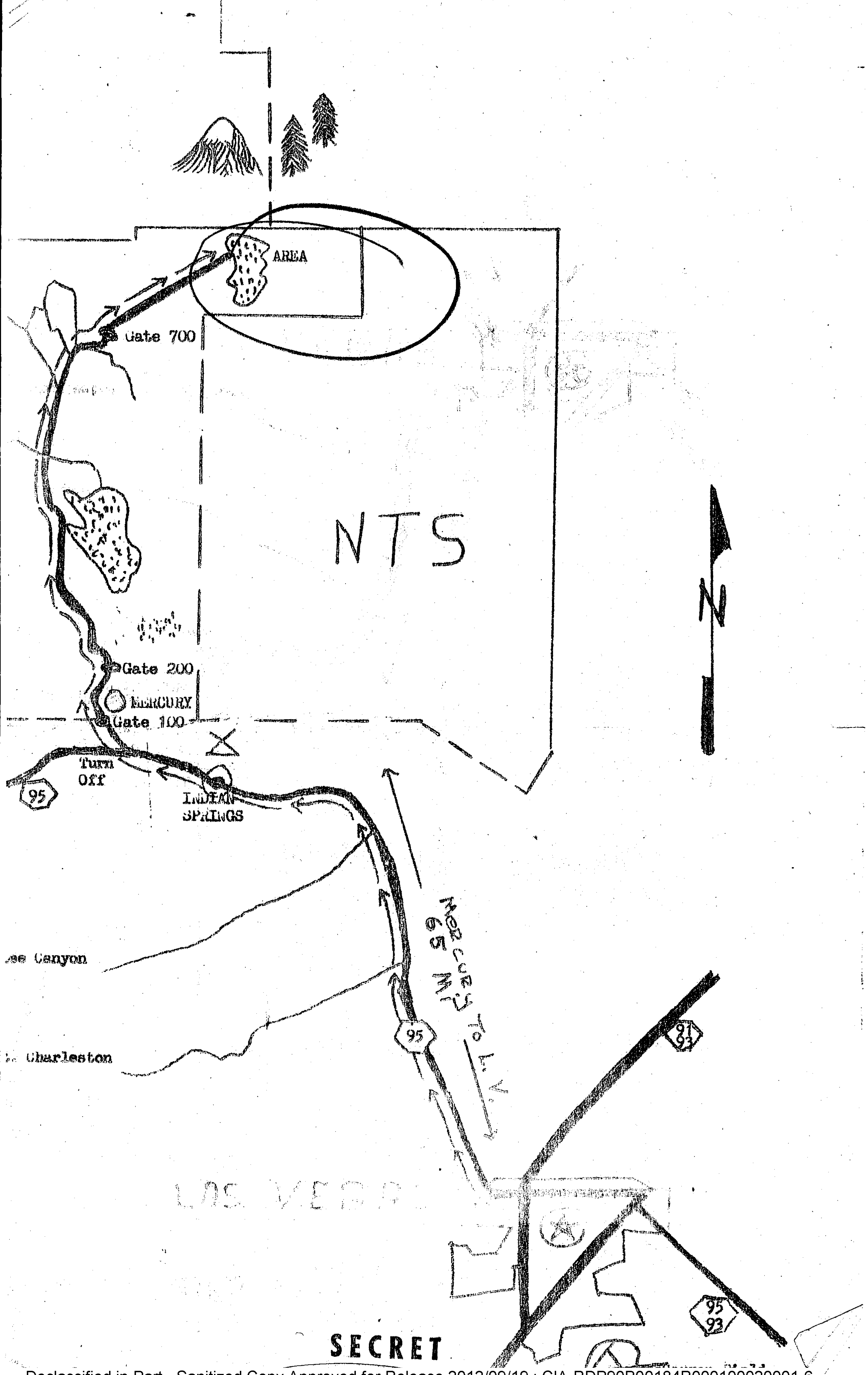
THURSDAY
SOUP: Fresh Vegetable
LUNCH: Veal Cutlet & Spagetti
DINNER: New York Steak

FRIDAY
SOUP: Clam Chowder
LUNCH: Scallops & Short Ribs
DINNER: Shrimp & Swiss Steak

SATURDAY
SOUP: Navy Bean
LUNCH: Hamburger Loaf
DINNER: Corned Beef Hash

COLD PLATES WILL BE SERVED FOR BOTH LUNCH AND DINNER

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